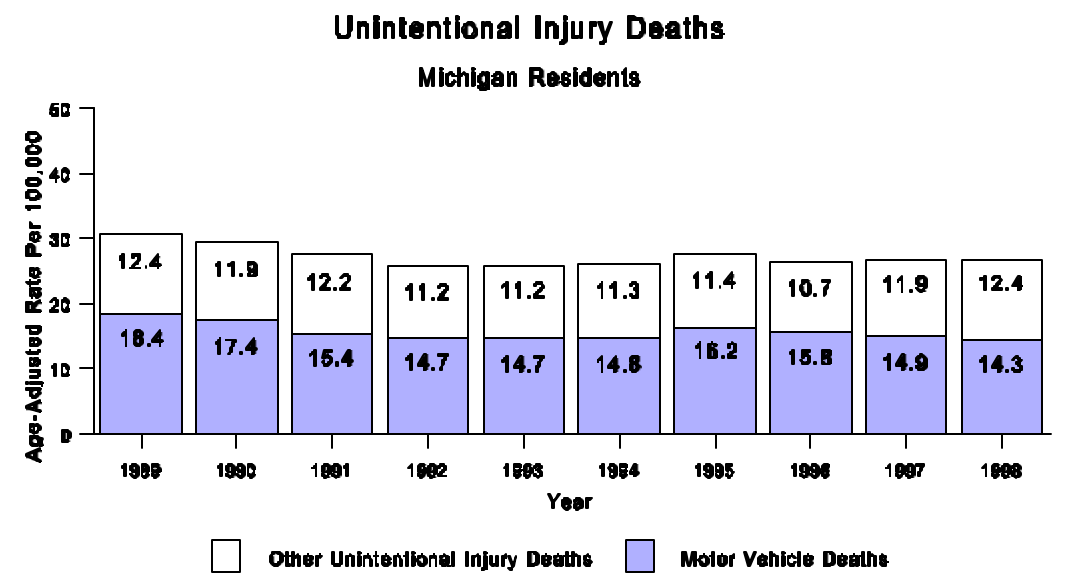


Vital Statistics Indicators

Unintentional Injury Deaths



Source: Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, MDCH

How are we doing?

Unintentional injuries are the fifth leading cause of all deaths in Michigan and the third leading cause of Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) for people below the age of 75.

Motor vehicle crashes are the most common cause of unintentional injuries deaths, accounting for almost 50 percent of all unintentional injury deaths. The trend for motor vehicle deaths has decreased over 22 percent since 1989. The introduction of advanced safety equipment in cars combined with stricter laws regarding drinking and driving has pushed the trend downward since the late 1970s. The rates for other unintentional injury deaths have remained relatively stable.

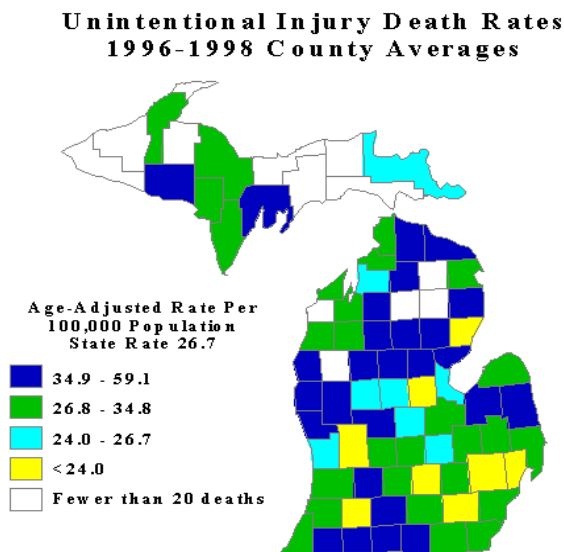
In 1998, there were 3,100 deaths due to unintentional injuries in Michigan. The age-adjusted rate for unintentional injury deaths was 26.7 per 100,000 population.

How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

The unintentional injury death rate for Michigan has been consistently lower than the U.S. rate. Michigan's 1997 age-adjusted death rate of 26.8 was lower than the U.S. rate of 30.4. Unintentional injuries were the fifth leading cause of all deaths in the U.S. and the third leading cause of YPLL in 1997.

How are different populations affected?

Unintentional injuries were the leading cause of death to Michigan residents who are at least one year old but under age 35. Unintentional injuries such as burns, crashes, drownings, and poisonings account for more than 40 percent of all deaths in the U.S. for youths aged 15 to 24 and for a quarter of all deaths for those aged 25 to 44.



Unintentional injury-related deaths disproportionately affect African-Americans. The Michigan 1998 age-adjusted rate for African-Americans was 33.3 compared to 25.6 for whites.

Men are more than twice as likely as women to die of unintentional injuries. In 1998, the Michigan age-adjusted unintentional injury death rate was 37.7 for men and 16.4 for women. The rate for African-American men was the highest at 51.2.

What other information is important to know?

Severe injuries can result in long-term physical and mental impairments. For every unintentional injury resulting in death there are almost 10 that result in disabilities.

What is the Department of Community Health doing to affect this indicator?

The department is actively working to decrease the incidence and burden of unintentional injuries. The Department assists in the distribution of smoke detectors, bicycle helmets, child safety seats, and safety educational materials. The department also offers training and certification for child passenger safety technicians to assist with child safety seat inspections conducted throughout the state.

The department supports SAFE KIDS coalitions that design, implement, and evaluate initiatives to prevent childhood injuries. A report is being prepared containing current knowledge, gaps in information, and recommendations for reducing childhood injuries in Michigan. A conference on best practices to reduce childhood injuries is being planned. Bimonthly alerts on product recalls and hazardous products are distributed statewide. Technical position papers on in-line skating and football injuries as well as consumer booklets for prevention of injuries for these sports have been developed.

A data collection system involving 25 hospital emergency departments is being implemented that will provide estimates of the types and causes of injuries, injury severity, and demographic characteristics of people seen in emergency departments for traumatic injuries. In addition, a report is being prepared on the health care costs incurred due to injuries in Michigan.

Last updated: February 2000.